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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
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INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE  
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SUBJECT: JAPAN REPORTS FIRST CASE OF TAMIFLU-RESISTANT H1N1  
INFLUENZA

1. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) announced July 2 it has detected the first case in Japan of Tamiflu-resistant H1N1 influenza A virus. The patient, a woman in her 40s from Toyonaka, Osaka Prefecture, had been administered Tamiflu since May 18 as a preventive measure after she was found to have had close contact with another patient infected with the H1N1 virus. The woman developed symptoms May 29 and the Osaka Prefectural Institute of Public Health confirmed June 18 the woman had been infected with a strain of the H1N1 virus containing a genetic mutation making it resistant to Tamiflu. The patient recovered after being given the drug Relenza.

2. In a July 2 press conference, representatives of the Osaka Prefectural Government explained the lag between detecting the Tamiflu resistant strain and reporting it to MHLW on July 1 was due to further tests needed to re-confirm the initial conclusion. However, three Institute employees had submitted a paper on the findings to the U.S. medical journal "Emerging Infectious Diseases" June 24. Japanese media criticized the Institute as giving priority to academic reports and not releasing information to the domestic public.

ZUMWALT